



NATIONAL WEATHER
SERVICE -
SEATTLE/TACOMA

SKYWARN® Spotter News

www.weather.gov/seattle

FALL 2015

Fall Is Upon Us - What Is Expected?

After a warm summer, the days are getting shorter and the nights longer. Fall is upon us. Winter is coming, bringing our storm season.

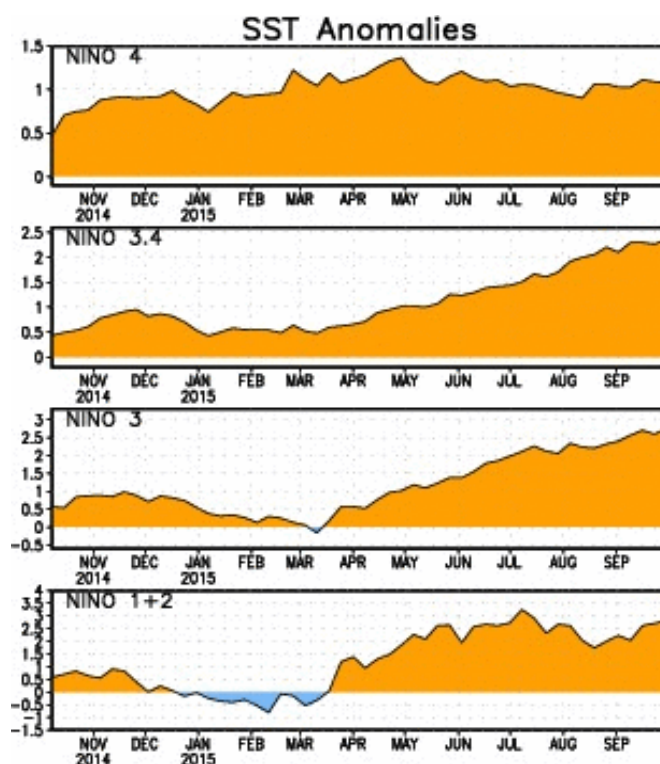
October marks the start of our wind storm season and runs through early March. We had a good dress rehearsal with the late summer blow on August 29th. Our flood season usually begins in November and runs through February. Mid November is usually when our lowland snow season begins and extends into early March. All of these events are infrequent, but when we do get any of these, they occur during the winter season.

What's expected this winter? One of the warmest El Niño's in recorded history has developed in the eastern Pacific Ocean equatorial waters. Sea surface temperatures in this region have risen to over 2.0 Celcius above average. El Niño is expected to continue through this winter and likely well into spring 2016.

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Sea surface temperature anomalies show we are heading toward strong El Niño conditions this winter.

www.cpc.noaa.gov



**Spotter
Training
coming to
Thurston,
King, What-
com, Kitsap,
Island &
Grays Har-
bor counties**

Spotter Training Update

Spotter training sessions are planned this fall for Thurston, King, Whatcom, Kitsap, Island, and Grays Harbor counties as well as a few other cities. Some of the training events have already been arranged with the rest coming soon. For announcements on specific dates and locations near you, visit our web site at www.weather.gov/seattle or watch your mailbox for announcements. The training helps new and veteran spotters, including interested citizens, amateur radio and law enforcement personnel. If you want to attend one of these sessions, please see the announcements and RSVP with your local emergency management organization. We look forward to seeing you at a training session near you!

WANTED: SPOTTER REPORTS

Many spotters feel their reports may not be important or needed. Oh, contraire!! If you are experiencing strong winds, accumulating snow, or any other spotter report criteria, contact us! These event-driven reports help support warning messages in effect, are reported by the media, help emergency management officials better determine where to deploy their limited resources, encourage people to take action to stay out of harm's way, and verify our warnings. So, don't be shy - contact us when needed !!

We May Contact You

We have a means to send email spotter activation notifications. This process is another way to raise your awareness to keep your eye to the sky and report any spotter criteria weather events such as strong damaging winds and snowfall. For this process to work well, it is important that we have your current email address. Contact Jay Neher at jay.neher@noaa.gov if you have a new email address or wish to ensure we have your current email address. Thanks!

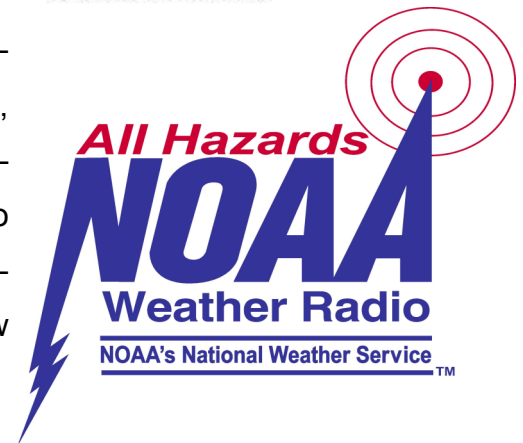
October is Weather Radio Awareness Month in Washington

Governor Jay Inslee has proclaimed October as Weather Radio Awareness Month as well as All-Hazards Preparedness Month in Washington. The campaign goal is to have weather radios become as common as smoke detectors in homes and businesses.

Direct from the National Weather Service, NOAA Weather Radio helps protect lives and property via its warning alarm feature, and site specific and event select capabilities. However, many people are not aware of this cost effective life-saving service or use it. Winter is just around the corner. A weather radio is an important preparedness tool in your home and car preparedness kits before the wind blows, the rivers rise or the snow flies!

Weather Radio is your personal all-hazards warning system and serves as Washington's "all-hazards" warning system, including tsunamis, volcanoes and hazardous releases. For more information and retailer discounts, visit the Washington State Emergency Management campaign host web site at www.emd.wa.gov.

As a part of the Weather Radio Month campaign, NWS forecast offices across the state will be activating the Emergency Alert System (EAS) for the Required Monthly Test (RMT) on October 14th at close to 1014 AM to initiate the statewide 'drop, cover and hold' earthquake drill and for the outer coast, the annual tsunami warning communications test as well. Your weather radio should activate for this drill and broadcasters will carry the test on air, all part of the west coast Great Shakeout. To register for the Great Shakeout, visit <http://shakeout.org/washington/> and join the fun! Hundreds of thousands of others do!



El Niño conditions are forecast this winter

Fall cont...

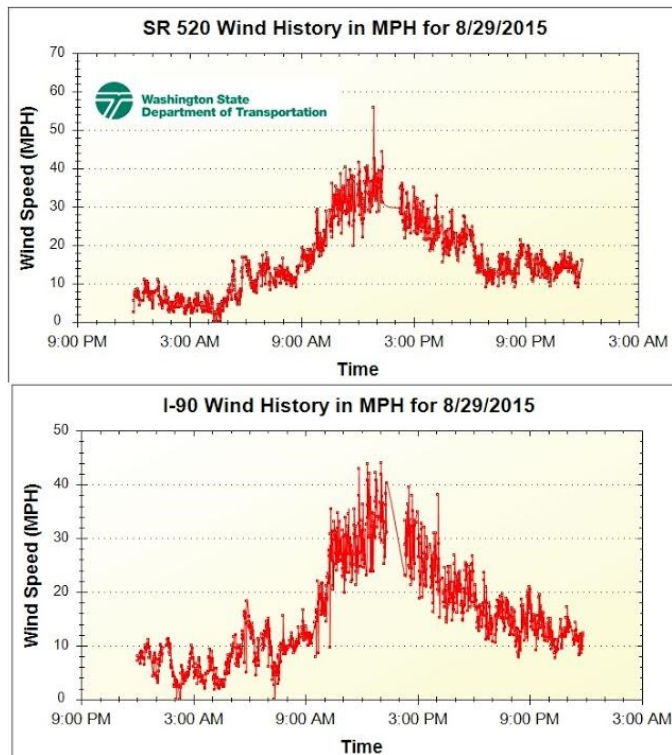
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El Niño for much of the Pacific NW usually brings warmer than average temperatures through the winter season. For precipitation, El Niño usually offers near or below average rainfall. With warmer than average temperatures, mountain snow levels are usually higher than normal meaning good odds on a less than average snow pack.

For the latest information about El Niño and the winter season outlook, visit the NWS Seattle web page (www.weather.gov/seattle) Seasonal Outlooks headline to view the latest from the National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center. The latest outlook gives huge odds on above normal temperatures and tips the odds toward below average precipitation from October through March. When comparing El Niño, La Niña and neutral conditions regarding significant storm season events like wind storms, floods and lowland snow, El Niño seasons produce the fewer storm events. Yet, that does not mean no significant storm events occur. As weather spotters, readiness and reporting hazardous weather conditions remain.

As a weather spotter, now is the time to prepare your home and business, and brush up on your winter weather reporting criteria. Ensure your rain gauge is clean, free of obstructions like trees and structures, and ready to go. Is your anemometer in good operating order?. If you do not have an anemometer,

have your Beaufort scale handy. In addition, ensure your snow boards and marking flags are ready to be placed in an unobstructed location, usually near your rain gauge. When prepared, you'll be ready to report any heavy rainfall amounts, strong winds and snow amounts. To top it off, fall is our secondary maximum for thunderstorms during the year. Have a safe winter and we look forward to your weather spotter reports this season.



Strong wind observation on SR 520 and I-90 bridges on Aug 29, 2015.

courtesy of WSDOT

First Freeze Trivia

The latest Climate Prediction Center seasonal outlook indicates increased odds on below average precipitation. What does average precipitation mean? Match up the total for October, November, and December average precipitation for these locations in western Washington. The answers will appear elsewhere in Skywarn Spotter News. This one is not easy. Good luck!!

Oct/Nov/Dec Normal Precipitation Total

Forks	30.75
Port Angeles	20.48
SeaTac Airport	10.71
Glacier Ranger Station	47.26
Olympia	14.97
Longmire - Mt Rainier	26.25



The Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS) program is a joint effort between the National Weather Service (NWS), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the Department of Defense (DOD). The ASOS system serves as the nation's primary surface weather observing network. ASOS is designed to support weather forecast activities and aviation operations and, at the same time, support the needs of the meteorological, hydrological, and climatological research communities.

Take Winter By Storm Campaign

Are YOU Ready For Winter? That is the opening quote on the Take Winter By Storm campaign web site at <http://takewinterbystorm.org/> The campaign web site offers emergency preparedness checklists for your home, vehicle, pets, and more, emergency contact cards, videos to help raise your readiness, and more.

You can register to obtain important updates and discounts on emergency supplies. The web site information helps you create and maintain preparedness kits, an emergency plan for you and your family, and how to practice your plan to enhance your readiness for whatever weather comes our way. Visit <http://takewinterbystorm.org/> to learn more and help you get ready for winter.



This year's Skywarn Recognition Day is slated for December 5th - mark your calendar! www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/hamradio/



Is Your Rain Gauge Clean?

Each rain droplet from this past rainy season has a microscopic dust or dirt nucleus. After a period of time, the microscopic nuclei collection looks like a bathtub ring near the bottom of the gauge. It only takes a few minutes to clean the gauge and helps produce more accurate precipitation measurements.

Pour some bleach and hot water into the gauge or measuring tube. Allow it to sit for a while, then rinse it with hot water. That's all there is to it! If the sediment and green "stuff" persists, it may take a few more rounds of soaking and cleaning.

Another cleaning alternative is to use denture cleaning tablets and warm water. Soak for a few hours, rinse out, and it will look practically brand new and ready for this winter!



CoCoRaHS Update

October 1st marked the start of the water year as well as our wet season across western Washington. But we had an unseasonably wet August. However, the rainfall was not uniform across western WA. Your CoCoRaHS rainfall reports are critical to us at the National Weather Service. It shows us just how dramatic the rainfall totals can vary from place to place.

We are actively seeking volunteer observers across the Olympic Peninsula this fall and winter to support the UW/NASA OLYMPEX project. More information on OLYMPEX can be found at <http://olympex.atmos.washington.edu/>.



Please check out www.cocorahs.org for more information about the CoCoRaHS program. There's no limit to the number of observers so join today!

National Weather Service Seattle

7600 Sandpoint Way NE

Seattle, WA 98115-6349

www.weather.gov/seattle



Climate Newsletter

The Office of the Washington State Climatologist produces a monthly weather summary that is available online or by email. Check out the summer review. To view OWSC's latest newsletter please visit:

www.climate.washington.edu/newsletter

Feedback!

Your feedback is wanted! Please let us know ...

What would you like to see in future Skywarn newsletters?

Additional spotter training?

CoCoRaHS training?

Comments or questions?

Contact jeff.michalski@noaa.gov

Trivia Question Answers

Ave Oct-Dec Precipitation Total

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